

Message Text

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51

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TAGS: PINT, DA

SUBJ: GOVERNMENT FORMATION - NO. 5 - POUL HARTLING -
PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE

REF: COPENHAGEN 3207

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1. POUL HARTLING HAS BEEN THE LEADER OF DENMARK'S

MODERATE LIBERAL PARTY (V) SINCE 1965. IN THE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF 1968-71, HE WAS MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS; IN OPPOSITION IN 1971-73, HE WAS CHAIRMAN OF HIS PARTY'S PARLIAMENTARY GROUP.

2. HARTLING FIRST ENTERED THE FOLKETING IN 1957. IN THE 1960 ELECTIONS HE WAS DEFEATED BY ONLY 137 VOTES; HE RETURNED IN 1964, AND IN 1968 HE WAS GIVEN MORE PERSONAL VOTES THAN ANY OTHER MEMBER OF HIS PARTY. DURING THE PERIOD OUTSIDE THE FOLKETING HE GAINED A STRONG POSITION WITHIN THE PARTY ORGANIZATION AND HELPED DRAFT A NEW PARTY MANIFESTO.

3. THE CONSERVATIVE (K)-RADICAL LIBERAL (R)-MODERATE LIBERAL COALITION GOVERNMENT FORMED IN 1968 WAS THE FULFILLMENT OF HARLING'S LONG-STANDING DESIRE. THERE HAD BEEN CLOSE TIES BETWEEN THE MODERATE LIBERALS AND THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY FOR MANY YEARS - THEY FORMED A GOVERNMENT IN 1950-53 - AND WHILE IN OPPOSITION THE TWO PARTIES JOINTLY DIRECTED THEIR EFFORTS AT REGAINING POWER. IN 1965-SHORTLY AFTER ASSUMING LEADERSHIP OF THE MODERATE LIBERAL PARTY - HE VOIDED SUGGESTION THAT THE RADICAL LIBERAL PARTY SHOULD BE INVITED TO JOIN AN ALLIANCE WITH THE OTHER TWO MAJOR NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES. WHEN THREE YEARS THE THREE PARTIES HAD FORMED THEIR FIRST GOVERNMENT.

4. DURING PAST TWO YEARS HARTLING HAS MOVED HIS PARTY EVEN MORE TO THE POLITICAL CENTER - STRAINING IN THE PROCESS ITS OLD TIES TO THE CONSERVATIVES. IT HAS BEEN HIS STRATEGY TO FORGE A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE RADICAL LIBERALS UNDER HILMAR BAUNSGAARD FROM BEING THE SOLE MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE BOURGEOIS BLOC AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. HARTLING'S ACHIEVEMENT IN OBTAINING THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP MARKS THE SUCCESSFUL RESULT OF THIS OVER ALL STRATEGY.

5. STRONGLY PRO-NATO, HARTLING CAN BE COUNTED ON TO MAINTAIN THE FOUR-PARTY DEFENSE COMPROMISE OF 1973. AS FOREIGN MINISTER, HE WORKED FOR EAST-WEST DETENTE BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE IS APT TO EMPHASIZE, MORE STRONGLY THAN DID THE PREVIOUS SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, THE NECESSITY OF A CREDIBLE DEFENSE AS A PRECONDITION FOR DETENTE. HE AND HIS PARTY ARE, MOREOVER, DENMARK'S STRONGEST SUPPORTERS OF DANISH MEMBERSHIP IN EC.

6. NOW 59 YEARS OLD, POUL HARTLING GREW UP IN COPENHAGEN, THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER FROM HIS PARTY TO HAVE AN URBAN

BACKGROUND. HIS FATHER WAS A TEACHER AND FOR A TIME MINISTER OF EDUCATION. YOUNG HARTLING GRADUATED FROM COPENHAGEN UNIVERSITY IN 1939 WITH A DEGREE IN DIVINITY, AND RECEIVED HIS INITIAL SCHOOLING IN ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING THROUGH HIS WORK IN CHRISTIAN ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONS. HE WAS A PRACTISING LUTHERAN MINISTER FOR NINE YEARS. AT THE AGE OF 35, HE BECAME RECTOR OF N. ZAHLES COLLEGE, COPENHAGEN, WHOSE EMINENT PUPILS INCLUDED PRINCESS (NOW QUEEN) MARGRETHE AND HER TWO SISTERS. HE CONTINUED TO HOLD THIS POSITION AS RECTOR UNTIL APPOINTED MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN 1968.

7. HARTLING IS AN AMBITIOUS MAN WHO CLOAKS HIS DRIVE AND STRENGTH OF WILL IN THE SOFT-SPOKEN, SLIGHTLY FUSSY MANNER OF AN OLD SCHOOL MASTER OR VILLAGE VICAR. IN COMMON WITH THE LATTER, MOREOVER, HIS COLLEAGUES CLAIM THAT HARTLING IS UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND THAT HIS WILL SHOULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY BE CONSIDERED THE LAW OF THE LAND. ON OCCASION HE HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT HE CAN RULE WITH A MAILED FIST, IF PARTY LOYALTY IS THREATENED. HE HEADED THE MODERATE LIBERALS SHOWDOWN WITH TWO OF THE PARTY'S MPS WHO IN 1965 CONDUCTED BEHIND-THE-SCENES NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE COUNTRY'S SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PRIME MINISTER. BUT HARTLING PREFERS TO BE AMIABLE. IF HIS TEMPER GETS THE BETTER OF HIM, HE HAS BEEN KNOWN TO DESCRIBE HIS ADVERSARY'S BEHAVIOR AS "UNREASONABLE" AND "DISHONEST".

8. HARTLING HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING AN INDUSTRIOUS MAN WHO CAN HANDLE A VERITABLE MOUNTAIN OF WORK WITHOUT SHOWING SIGNS OF TIREDNESS. HE LIKES TO RELAX WITH HIS FAMILY, PREFERABLY TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF MUSIC AND SINGING. HE PLAYS THE VIOLIN AND IS, REPORTEDLY, A GOOD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHESS PLAYER. HARTLING WAS MARRIED IN 1948 TO ELSEBETH H.F. KIRKEMANN, A TRAINED PHYSICIAN, WHO HAS RETIRED FROM ACTIVE PRACTICE. THE COUPLE HAVE FOUR CHILDREN, A 27 YEAR OLD SON, NIELS, 26 YEAR OLD TWINS, IDA AND OLE, AND A 19 YEAR OLD SON, SVEND. HARTLING SPEAKS AND WRITES EXCELLENT ENGLISH. DUNNIGAN

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